



THE MAKING of NEW CHINA

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THE British have the term "empire-building"; it is descriptive of the nation's purpose and work during the past century. This term "empire-building" has suggested our theme, "The Making of New China." The whole Christian world has been united for more than a century in the task of making over the old China, whose position the Chinese themselves are now coming to realize is altogether an impossibility in this twentieth century. A New China is a world-necessity.

China, without doubt, is the oldest nation on the earth, and we know of no antecedent nation from which she derived her civilization. Invaded by the tartar hordes from the north and west, she has in every instance conquered the conquerors by her language and civilization. Other nations of both ancient and modern times have borrowed extensively; but China hitherto has borrowed almost nothing. Her government, language, literature, philosophy and religion — her whole civilization are all her own. It would seem that Buddhism alone had been borrowed; and Buddhism, refusing to become assimilated, is to this day recognized by the Chinese themselves as foreign. James Legge in his work, "The Religions of China," does not mention it.

Again, China has never felt the need of foreign commerce, while in military strength, until within the last century, it has dominated the Orient. It is a well known fact that when the European nations opened diplomatic relations with the Chinese Government, their first representatives were received in the hall set apart for the reception of bearers of tribute, because China had never before in all her history received representatives from any other than the tribute-paying nations that surrounded her.

In contrast with this is the record of Japan, whose language, literature, philosophy and religion are all borrowed directly from China. Every Japanese, who is not a Christian, reveres or worships Confucius, a Chinese sage; while commercially, the Japanese have always been connected with older and stronger nations.

China, considering her size and past record, has already made most marvelous progress in receiving modern ideas. This astonishing fact is most evident to foreigners who live within her borders. It took centuries for Europe to become permeated with Christian thought; but we must remember, also, that less than a half century ago it required months to cross the Pacific Ocean. It does not seem incredible that the combined forces of Christendom can today accomplish more for civilization in one decade than was accomplished in the first century of our era.

Those who know her best assuredly believe that the Chinese nation, when Christianized, will become the strongest nation of the Orient; and, with her capacity for government and the recognized colonizing ability, will give to Christianity at once the strongest and the most missionary character yet manifested by any other than the Anglo-Saxon race.

The forces which are making for a new China are manifold. Like an atmosphere they press in on every side of Chinese life. Her home administration and foreign relations, her commercial, literary, moral and religious life are being changed by foreign influences, while the territorial integrity of the empire is being guaranteed and the general government is being strengthened and transformed. We shall treat of these forces under five divisions: the influence of war, of commerce, of the press, of the school, and of gospel preaching.

1. The Influence of War

CHINA has been brought into vital contact with the modern world through her foreign wars, of which she had four in the century prior to the year 1900. The first was with Great Britain in 1840; the second with Great Britain and France in 1858; the third with France in 1885; and the fourth with Japan in 1894-5. All four came through commercial relations. While in each China was ignominiously defeated, she never once acknowledged defeat to her own people. The masses were officially deceived by the imperial proclamations that her armies

had been victorious. When at length, in 1900, the combined armies of the powers marched to Peking and took possession of their capital, scattering their armies, the government could no longer conceal from the most ignorant its utter helplessness and disgrace; and the masses of the people, be it said to their credit, were not displeased with the victory of the foreigner.

China is learning her lesson. The nation has been mightily stirred. Great modern arsenals are running double time preparing the most modern weapons and armaments. In almost every province large armies are being constantly drilled by foreign drill-masters, largely Japanese, in modern tactics; so in every way China is preparing, not to wage war against the world, but simply to protect herself. In this she will succeed, and we shall not regret it.

China's wars have been costly; but they have brought an ample recompense, the immediate results being briefly summarized as follows: The exclusive policy of the Manchu Government is broken down and the nation is brought both diplomatically and commercially into the family of nations; the whole country is opened to missionaries; native Christians have freedom from persecution; and all the world-forces are free in molding a new civilization.

2. The Influence of Commerce

FOREIGN commerce has assumed large proportions. One hundred years ago foreigners had no permanent foothold on Chinese soil, being confined within Macao, a Portuguese colony, or compelled to remain on their own trading vessels. Even as late as 1840 not only business men, but even representatives of European governments, were tolerated in the so-called "factories" of Canton only after they had given bond through the Chinese merchant princes for their good behavior. Today more than thirty treaty ports are open to foreign residence and commerce; nearly 20,000 Europeans and Americans are engaged in business; and the combined import and export trade amounts to some \$450,000,000 gold per annum. The foreign business population of China is confined mainly to two cities, Shanghai and Hongkong. The latter, one mile from the mainland, was once a Chinese possession but now is a British colony. Foreign families, however, are in almost every province and come in daily contact with China's millions in innumerable ways and with incalculable influence. Shanghai is the largest port in the Orient,

its foreign population approximating 8,000 and the native population 1,000,000. It is called the "Model Settlement," because both the business men and missionaries are ambitious to make its institutions and government models for Chinese local city governments. Thus, in manifold ways, commerce in China, as elsewhere, is a civilizing agency.

With her system of river steamers, her steam-launch lines plying her extensive system of canals, her many railways connecting the distant parts of the empire, her mines opening and machinery coming from the Western land, China is already unalterably committed to a new era of progress.

3. The Influence of the Press

WHEN missionaries first landed in China they, with the traders, were confined to Macao, to the "factories" in Canton, and later on to Hongkong. During those early years, literary work was both necessary and most practicable. Little preaching was possible while the language had to be learned, dictionaries made, the Scriptures translated and the beginnings of Christian literature created. Morrison gave himself primarily to this work. S. Wells Williams, for twenty years not permitted to enter within the walls of a native city, laid the foundations of the present extensive publishing business.

There are now three great presses in China: (a) The Presbyterian Mission Press of Shanghai, one of the great printing plants of the world, employing hundreds of men, is perhaps the best known foreign institution in the empire. (b) The American Methodists, north and south, have united in building a large printing establishment in Shanghai and a branch house in Fuchow. (c) The American Baptists, also, north and south, have united in a China Baptist Publication Society with a press in Canton. They have a plant worth some \$20,000, with unlimited opportunities as the only mission press in all south China. These three publishing houses are busy, in fact have more than they can possibly do, in supplying Christian literature for the Chinese. The literature includes the Bible in the several Chinese versions, religious papers, text-books, commentaries and many other translated or Chinese works.

The production of literature is stimulated by two great societies: a general educational society and The Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General

Knowledge. The former aims to secure all the missionary talent of the empire for making text-books; the latter encourages the production of all kinds of literature, secular and religious, as its only test-asking, "Will it help to uplift the Chinese?" In this work some of the strongest men in the missionary body are engaged; and perhaps no work done today is more far-reaching in its influence.

Mission work bears its best fruitage when it helps the natives to do for themselves the same kind of work which has been attempted by the mission. Measured by this standard, literary work in China has been most successful. Some years ago daily Chinese newspapers were started in both Hongkong and Shanghai. Their models were the publications of the mission presses; and the large English dailies also published for the European and American agents in Hongkong or Shanghai, who conduct the business of the whole world with the empire.

While the Chinese have been imitating these great English dailies for years, until 1900 their papers were printed in the ancient classical style so popular with the literati, but unintelligible to other people. Since then, however, the Chinese publishers, bidding for the patronage of the business world, have been forced to colloquialize their papers to make them readable. Their subscription lists have grown by leaps and bounds. Not only so, but all through the provinces similar papers are now published in the colloquial.

It is a most interesting and important fact that the leading secular daily paper, not only of Shanghai but of the whole empire, *The North China Herald*, is owned and edited by a Christian missionary. As it is known to have the largest circulation, it is imitated by the Chinese newspaper world; and being not only pro-foreign but pro-Christian, it has a vast influence for righteousness. To stimulate the Chinese to produce modern papers and then direct them in their early efforts, is real and effective missionary work.

4. The Influence of the Mission School

FROM the beginning of mission work in China the mission school has been an important factor. Besides making disciples, we must teach them. The school has done both. The boys are more easily reached than the fathers, and frequently the fathers are won through the boys. Heathen homes are entered, prejudices dispelled, communities and cities are opened and won by the schools. Above all this, education provides responsible leaders for the future Church.

Mission schools are dual in their course of study. The Chinese education fits the pupil only to read and write well his own language—a most difficult task, however, with 40,000 characters to be committed to memory. The leaders of the Church must be masters of their own language to gain the respect of the literary Chinese; but they ought also to know the branches taught in our Western schools, hence we teach both. This often requires two sets of teachers.

Mission schools are found in nearly every province, and range from the primary and boarding school to academy, college and theological seminary. It is the policy of many missions to have a primary school in every outstation, a boarding school in every main station, an academy in every mission or group of mission stations, and a college and theological seminary for two or more missions. Perhaps the best college in China is St. John's College in Shanghai, under the auspices of the American Episcopalians. Set in a beautiful campus is a fine group of buildings with modern equipment. Here is a large body of students with their athletic sports and modern text-books, and a large faculty of both American professors and Chinese instructors, many of whom are graduates from American Universities. The institution is doing college-grade work. The southern Methodists have two schools that do college work; the northern Methodists have at least three; the Presbyterians have three or more; the Congregationalists have two, as have also the Church Mission, the London Mission, and, in fact, all of the stronger societies. These academies and colleges reach almost every section of the country. In this connection it is most interesting to notice that the American Presbyterians and English Baptists, whose work adjoins in the Shangtung Province, have united there in the support of a college and theological seminary. One denomination establishes and conducts a theological seminary and both denominations patronize it, and the other denomination conducts a college and both patronize it. A similar arrangement is just being made in Peking between the Presbyterians, the Methodists and the Congregationalists, in conducting three schools—a college, a theological seminary and a medical school. The Southern Baptist Convention and the American Baptist Missionary Union have arranged to establish and conduct jointly in Shanghai, a union college and theological seminary. For this school \$40,000 has been promised by the two boards, and it is hoped that the land can be bought and the buildings erected before the end of 1906.

Our system of mission schools is bearing its natural, logical fruitage in stimu-

lating the Chinese Government to establish a similar system under imperial patronage. In the year 1898, the young emperor issued an imperial edict to confiscate all Buddhist and Taoist temples and use the property to establish Western schools.

It was this edict more than anything else that brought on the Boxer uprising; but since 1900 the empress dowager herself has been forced by public sentiment to issue a more practical educational edict, opening Western schools at public expense in every province and in every county. The immediate result is more than 2,000 primary and intermediate schools, whose influence is felt in many communities. Inasmuch as almost the only conception the officials have of the Western school has been gained from the mission school, they are copying our schools, carefully omitting all Scripture teaching and Sunday observance. Even this means a great deal; and furthermore, they are obliged to employ, as teachers of Western learning, young men educated in our academies and colleges. It is, then, our privilege today to put the Christian stamp on the teachers of these more than 2,000 primary and intermediate schools. And it behooves American Christians so to increase the capacity of their mission schools that they can continue to supply the Chinese Government with teachers so well trained that they cannot afford to have teachers from any other source, not even from Japan, as is the tendency just now.

Besides this, eleven of the eighteen provinces have already established universities, in at least eight of which prominent missionary educators have been invited to be presidents; and in one of these, in order to secure the missionary desired, the government agreed to the principle and established the precedent of religious liberty, admitting Christian boys on the same basis as non-Christians. With pro-foreign, if not pro-Christian teachers in the primary and intermediate schools and with prominent missionary educators presiding over their provincial universities, what may we not expect from this new system of schools in the Chinese Empire?

5. The Influence of Gospel Preaching

NOT to deal with the very large work of the medical missionary, the gospel evangelist, above all, has been the pioneer of Western civilization in every section of the Chinese Empire. Missionaries are working today in almost every prefecture of each province. They know the Chinese language and live with the people. They have a score of avenues into the homes and hearts that are closed

to all other foreigners. Nine tenths of the Chinese who know the foreigner at all know him as a missionary, and through him only they know the world. The missionary is preeminently the go-between for the Occident and the Orient, as well as the pioneer of civilization. Trade follows the missionary.

But in addition to all this work, and more important than it all, is his primary task, so well begun, of introducing the saving gospel of Jesus Christ into every community and into every grade of Chinese life. The most significant thing about the gospel is its power to make a new man. Jesus Christ gives a man a new birth and then enables him to live a new life. This is true in the actual experience of mission work. It is further self-evident that China will be made new just as men are made new. A new nation cannot be made out of unrenewed material. The results which are already manifest, and which are so encouraging, spring primarily from direct gospel work. It is precisely because the gospel has been preached, and is being preached, in all China, that the whole empire is feeling the impulse of a new life.

Much as commerce, press and schools have done, the thousands from abroad preaching the gospel every day, and the five or six thousand native preachers doing the same, in cities, towns, hamlets and dales, reaching the people every week by the hundred thousands, these are the principal agents who are to make the new nation that is to be. The seed has been planted, and we have to await the fruitage — a new China — renewed and glorified by Jesus Christ.



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